

June 22, 23 & 24, 2001

Scandinavian Midsummer Festival



A DAILY ASTORIAN special section

Astoria, Oregon

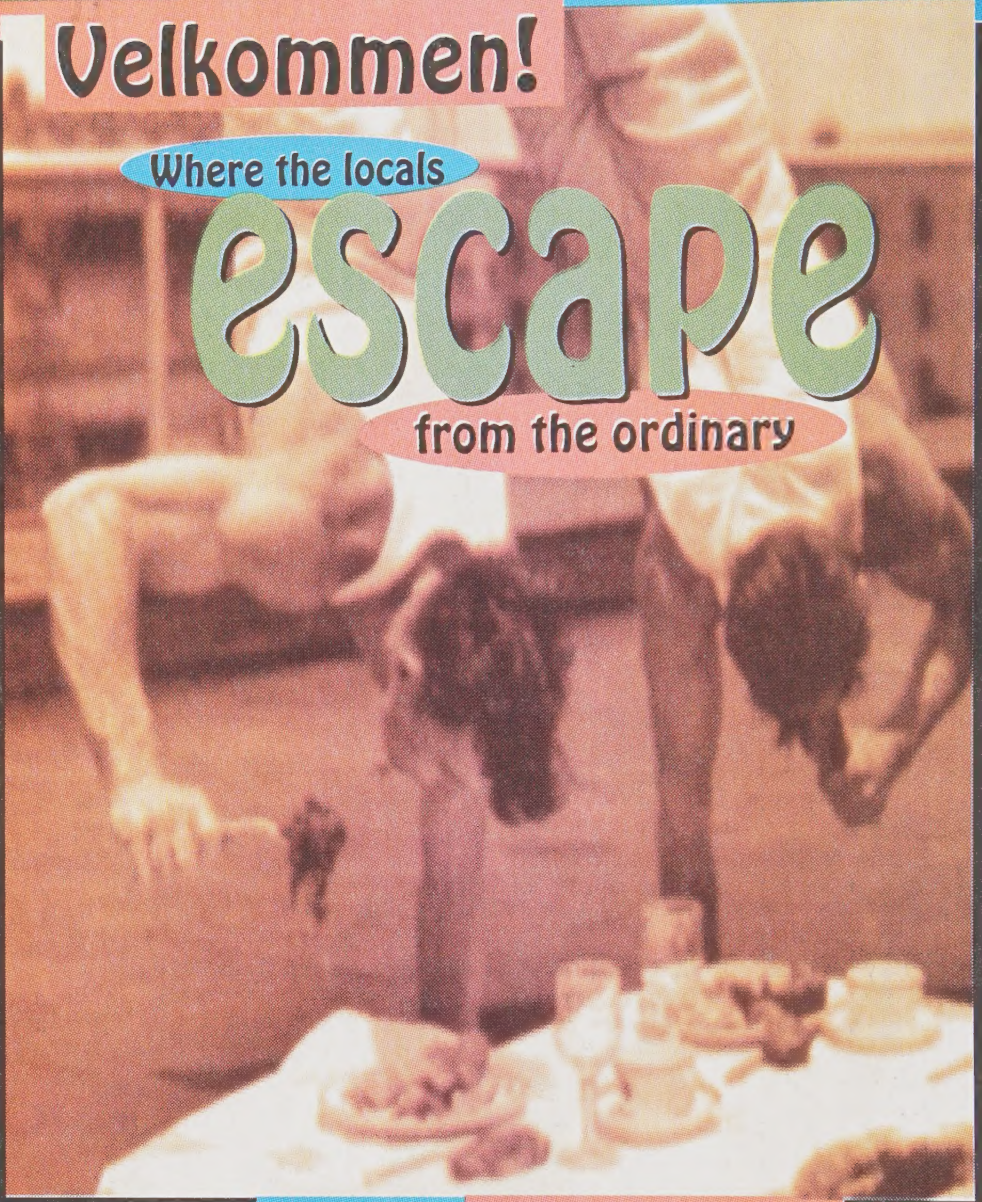


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Welcome to the 2001 Scandinavian Midsummer Festival

Now in its 34th year, Astoria's Scandinavian Midsummer Festival began as one Brownie troop's tribute to Girl Scout Founder Juliet Lowe.

A Brownie troop under the direction of Astorians Carol Obie, Shirley Tinner and Nellie Norrman was studying Norway as part of a citywide celebration planned by Girl Scouts in honor of Lowe. The Brownies learned a Norwegian song and some Norwegian folk dances to present at the event and borrowed authentic Norwegian costumes made by Adelaine Sather of Astoria.

Soon, the Brownies had been asked to repeat their performance at so many gathering that several parents decided to form a children's Scandinavian folk dancing group, which became the Scandinavian Folk Dancers. The dancing troupe now has been split into two children's groups, the Vikings and Nordic Dancers, and there is an adult group called Scandia.

The festival itself, sort of a modern-day adaptation of an annual picnic and celebration the Scandinavian lodges in the area held many years ago in Astoria, actually began as a fundraiser for the young dancers. The dancers wanted to go to Solvang, Calif., a Danish community north of Los Angeles.

The first event, in which area Scandinavian lodges pitched in to prepare a variety of Nordic dishes and to display and demonstrate old-country crafts and customs, was held at the Clatsop County Fairgrounds and drew approximately 2,500 visitors. Attendance steadily increased as the festival became known throughout the Pacific Northwest.

The Scandinavian Folk Dancers disbanded around 1974 after a cruise to Mexico. But the event which sent them to Solvang has brought many to Astoria and is likely to continue to do so.

Ska du festa med oss? (Will you party with us?)

Midsummer. One of the most beloved of Scandinavian holidays, it's a glorious time for people of the north countries who have endured the dark days of a long, cold winter. For Astoria and its large Scandinavian population, it's a time to renew ties with the old country.

Locals and visitors from far and wide will celebrate the return of sunshine and warmth at the 34th annual Scandinavian Midsummer

Festival June 22-24. The grounds of Astoria High School will be decorated with birch branches and wildflowers ensconcing booths full of authentic handicrafts and Scandinavian delicacies. A continuous program of folk dancing and musicians will provide entertainment, and a program featuring local immigrants will be featured. Festival organizers announced that the North Coast Symphony will perform Scandinavian selections at 2 p.m. in the high school auditorium.

Festivities begin Friday evening with the 2001 Midsummer Festival Queen's Coronation. The Torchlight Procession follows, with a bonfire and hex burning. Afterward, visitors can join the newly crowned Miss Scandinavia and dance the night away at the Queen's Ball, featuring "Scandinavian country" music led by Coreen Bergholm. The Beer Garden operates from 7 p.m. to midnight, in cooperation with The Wet Dog Cafe and Sherry's on Broadway.

Saturday starts with the Clatsop Realtors Association's Breakfast from 7 to 11 a.m., raising funds for local student scholarships. Festival booths officially open at 10 a.m. Saturday, and the traditional "Optog" parade greets Astoria along Commercial Street at 11 a.m. The 2001 Scandinavian Midsummer Festival Court, colorful Scandinavian costumes, flags and dancers are highlights of this walking parade, and a troll or two might try to steal a kiss from spectators.

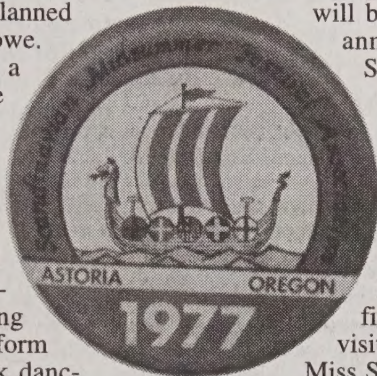
The Midsummer Pole Raising takes place at noon, followed by the official opening ceremonies in the high school's center courtyard.

From 9 p.m. to midnight, a public dance will feature the long-awaited return of the Kaare Nielsen Band. The Beer Garden will be open for food and drinks from noon to midnight Saturday.

Sunday's events start with the Pannukakku Brunch from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m., sponsored by the Astoria Rotary Club. Festival booths reopen from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. An interdenominational worship service starts at 11 a.m., and the North Coast Symphony performs at 2 p.m.

Raffle tickets will be available for purchase throughout the festival, with the grand prize being two round-trip tickets to Scandinavia. The winning tickets will be drawn during the closing ceremony 4 p.m. Sunday.

Festival admission is \$6 for adults, which includes a collector pin; \$1 for children 6 to 12, who receive a button; and free for kids younger than 6.



34th-Annual Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer Festival Schedule of Events

June 22-24 at Astoria High School, 1001 W. Marine Drive

Activities & Events

FRIDAY, JUNE 22

7:30 p.m. Coronation of Miss Scandinavia 2001

Dusk Torchlight Parade and Hex Burning Bonfire

7 p.m. to Midnight Beer Garden (in cooperation with the Wet Dog Cafe)

9 p.m. to Midnight Queen's Ball

•Featuring "Scandinavian Country" with leader Coreen Bergholm

TORCHLIGHT PARADE and HEX BONFIRE

Immediately following a short photo session of the Court, the Scandia Dancers and a parade of musicians will lead the Court in a torchlight procession to the parking lot south of the auditorium for the traditional hex burning ceremony and community sing-along.

According to Scandinavian folklore, tossing straw hexes into the flames of the bonfire brings good luck and freedom from evil spirits to those who pitch a straw doll into the fire.

During the preparation for the 1980 Festival, the hexes were nowhere to be found and none were tossed into the bonfire. This may be the reason why Miss Scandinavia 1980 had a terrible time keeping her crown on. The straw hexes are made each year by the Scandinavian Festival Court and volunteers.

SATURDAY, JUNE 23

7 a.m. to 11 a.m. Clatsop Realtors Breakfast (scholarship fund-raiser) in the Astoria High School cafeteria

10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Booths open featuring authentic Scandinavian delicacies and hand-crafts

10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Barnefest (fun activities for children in the gym)

11 a.m. Optog, a walking parade through downtown Astoria (weather permitting)

11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Pea Soup Lunch, sponsored by the Swedish Order of VASA

12:15 p.m. Flag-raising ceremony & Midsummer Pole raising

Noon to Midnight Beer Garden Open (in cooperation with the Wet Dog Cafe)

1 to 6 p.m. Continuous entertainment

4:30 to 7 p.m. Scandinavian Dinner, sponsored by the Swedish Order of VASA

7 p.m. Featured entertainment, "Shanghaied in Astoria"

7 p.m. Introduction of Honored Immigrants

9 p.m. to Midnight Public dance featuring "Kaare Nielsen"

9 p.m. to Midnight Beer Garden, in cooperation with the Wet Dog Cafe

Saturday entertainment event-by-event

In the Auditorium

1 p.m. Musical Jam Session

1:40 p.m. Nordleys of Portland

2:10 p.m. Lithuanian Dance Group

2:40 p.m. Livikat NW Kantele Players

3:15 p.m. VASA Youth Group

3:40 p.m. Liekkeringen Dancers

4:10 p.m. Spirit Sings

4:40 p.m. Tanhaujat Dancers of Seattle

5:10 to 6 p.m. Nordic Dancers

Viking Dancers

Scandia Dancers

7 p.m. Immigrants with Master of Ceremonies David Shannon, followed by Shanghaied in Astoria

Astoria Downtown Historic District Assoc.

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Annual Scandinavian Festival

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Saturday entertainment event-by-event (cont.)

Center Lawn

1 to 2 p.m. Nordic Dancers
 Viking Dancers
 Scandia Dancers
 2:00 p.m. VASA Youth Group
 2:25 p.m. Spirit Sings
 2:55 p.m. Tanhaujat Dancers of Seattle
 3:25 p.m. Parade of Native Costumes
 3:55 p.m. Nordleys of Portland
 4:25 p.m. Lithuanian Dance Group
 4:55 p.m. Leikkeringen Dancers
 5:20 p.m. Livikat NW Kantele Players

In the Beer Garden

2 to 4 p.m. Scandinavian Country
 4 to 6 p.m. Sven & Jorgen
 6 to 9 p.m. Astoria Scandia Ensemble
 9 to Midnight Hey Guys & Gals

SUNDAY, JUNE 24

8:30 to 11:30 a.m. Pannukakku Brunch,
 sponsored by the Astoria Rotary

10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Booths open featuring
 authentic Scandinavian delicacies and hand-
 crafts

11 a.m. Interdenominational worship ser-
 vice, auditorium

1 to 4 p.m. Continuous entertainment

2 to 3:30 p.m. Featured entertainment, The
 North Coast Symphony (early arrival is sug-
 gested – seating is limited)

4 p.m. Closing ceremony and raffle drawing

Sunday entertainment event-by-event

In the Auditorium

2 to 3:30 p.m. North Coast Symphony Band
 4 Closing ceremony and raffle drawing

Center Lawn

1 p.m. Hey Guys & Gals
 1:30 p.m. Nordic, Viking & Scandia
 Dancers
 2:15 p.m. Astoria Scandinavian Ensemble
 2:45 p.m. Viking Alumni Dancers
 3:25 p.m. Scandinavian Country

BARNEFEST SATURDAY

In Gym Mezzanine

HOURS: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

(Children 8 and under must
 be accompanied by an adult.)

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www.astoriaregatta.org

August 8th-12th, 2001

I have had a great year representing the Scandinavian Midsummer Festival as Miss Scandinavia 2000. My heritage means a lot to me and our family. My parents searched the family archives for a name for me before I was born, and found that one of my great-grandmother's aunts was named Briita. This Briita was born, raised and never left the Oulu area of Finland. My heritage comes to me from my father's side. His grandparents immigrated from Vihanti and Muuhos, Finland.

They met and married and established their home while raising children in the Brownsmead area.

The Scandinavian Midsummer Festival means a lot to me. I have been in the dance group and participated in every festival since the second grade, when I was also Junior Miss Finland. I wear a costume from the SuomiSalmi region of Finland, which I also wore as Junior Miss Finland. We just kept letting out the hem and making new blouses and vests.

For the festival of 2000, I got my last piece of the costume, the ladies version of the apron. I just love it, it means a lot to me. I also got a new gold pin for my blouse. My very first costume was



Miss Scandinavia 2000 – Briita L. Blair

made for me before I was two years old so I could be like everyone else at the festival.

Every year at the festival my friend, Laurie Kennell (Miss Sweden 2000 and 1990 Junior Miss Sweden) and I would sit in the Queen's Chair to make sure we both would fit. It was such an honor to be chosen Miss Scandinavia 2000. The Scandinavian Festival is such a good way of teaching our young people about their heritage.

I want to thank the Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer

Festival Association, the Finnish Brotherhood and Ladies of Kaleva for all their support the last two years. Also my family, grandma and grandpa Nettie and Abby Blair of Youngs River and grandpa and grandma Bill and Dede Demander of Walluski, my mom, Diana Coryell of Warrenton and my dad, Randy Blair of Youngs River, for making sure my heritage and the names of my family will never sound foreign to me.

This last year has been such a blessing and to be able to have one more year is something I will remember and be so thankful for, for the rest of my life.

PAST QUEENS

1968	Marjorie Yost	1984	Ann Madsen
1969	Carol Johansen	1985	Marja Leena Tila
1970	Sirpa Perkiomaki	1986	Donna Brunner
1971	Melissa Hill	1987	Shari Fay
1972	Rhonda Lammi	1988	Saara Carlson
1973	Judy Angberg	1989	Josie Hemeon
1974	Marianne Larson, crowned	1990	Kristen Jacobsen
	Linda Sjoblom, reigned	1991	Melissa Rose
1975	Karen Niemi	1992	Allea Thomas
1976	Kim Tinner	1993	Jenny Gustafson
1977	Gail Norman	1994	Amy Goin
1978	Tina Hess	1995	Kerry Stevenson
1979	Susan Edison	1996	Niina Salo
1980	Leila Koskela	1997	Jaclyn O'Bryant
1981	Sigrid Ness	1988	Caryn Nelson
1982	Cheryl Cruzan	1999	Amanda Caldwell
1983	Julie Lampa	2000	Briita Lynn Blair

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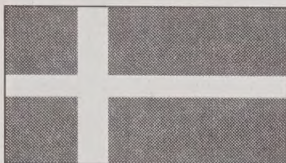
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2001 Astoria Scandinavian
Midsummer Festival Court



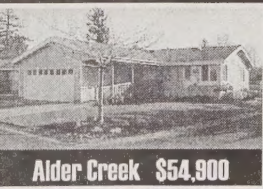
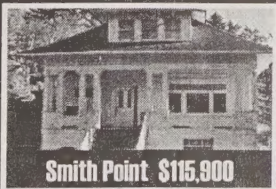
MISS DENMARK

Kristin Leeann Oja, 17, is a senior at Astoria High School and this year's Miss Denmark. With a 3.83 grade point average, Oja has earned varsity letters for three years in swimming and track. She is president of the National Honor Society and a member of the Port City Singers and the Big Brother, Big Sister program. She is also involved in the Leadership class.

Oja enjoys spending time with her family, singing and being outdoors. She has worked as a life-guard and instructor at the Astoria Aquatic Center for 21½2 and is an active church youth leader at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She is the daughter of Alan and Carla Oja of Astoria, and the granddaughter of Owen and Mozelle Oja of Astoria and George and Fay Lamphiear of Chehalis, Wash.



Jennie Hillard 338-9397



AREA Properties

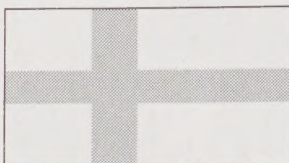
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2001 Astoria Scandinavian
Midsummer Festival Court




MISS FINLAND

Angela Elizabeth Van Cleave, is an 18-year-old senior at Astoria High School. She is active in the drama club and leadership class. She played junior varsity soccer and kept statistics for JV girls basketball. She is on the honor roll.

Van Cleave, who has been a Viking-Nordic dancer for eight years and was Junior Miss Finland in 1992, enjoys reading, dancing, talking to people, traveling and theater. She performed in "Shanghaied in Astoria" for three years. Van Cleave is a member of Peace Lutheran Church and is the Columbia Coast Cluster representative for Oregon. She works as a cashier at the Astoria Aquatic Center.

Van Cleave is the daughter of Karen Van Cleave and the granddaughter of Roy and Gertie Kinnunen, all of Astoria.




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2001 Astoria Scandinavian
Midsummer Festival Court



MISS NORWAY

Emilia Astrid Duoos, 18, is Miss Norway 2001. A senior at Astoria High School, Duoos is a member of the swim team and serves as the secretary for the Hockey Club. She mentors second-grade students at Capt. Robert Gray Elementary School.

In her free time, Duoos enjoys water sports, drawing, going to the beach, watching comedies with friends, going to concerts and traveling. She is the daughter of Terry and Sirpa Duoos of Astoria.



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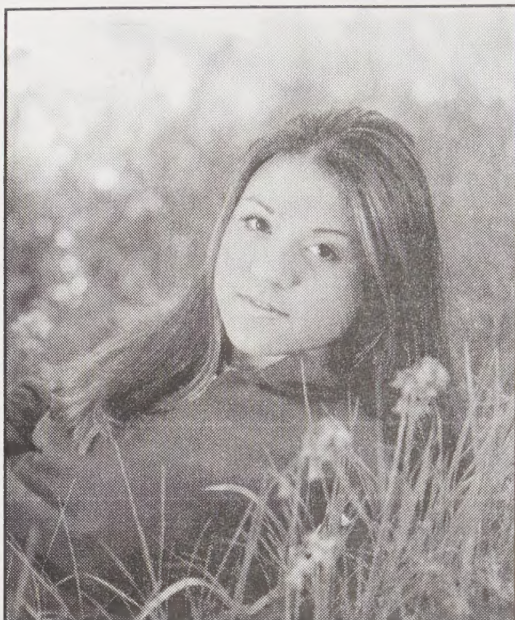
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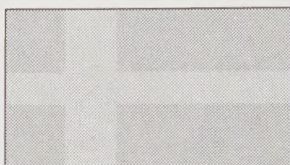
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**2001 Astoria Scandinavian
Midsummer Festival Court**



MISS SWEDEN

Kimberly A. O'Bryant, 19 is Miss Sweden, a freshman at Clatsop Community College. Her high school activities included volleyball and soccer; she also taught German language and culture to elementary school students. She was active in her Health Occupations class and intends to become a nurse practitioner.

O'Bryant enjoys walking, running, kickboxing and modern dance, as well as outdoor activities such as camping, boating and fishing. Her greatest love is drawing and painting. She is the daughter of Tim and Melba O'Bryant of Astoria, and granddaughter of Obie and the late Gertrude O'Bryant of Astoria and Vicente and Ofelia Makinica of Portland.

Mary Ann Ylipelto



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2001 Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer Junior Festival Court



Junior Miss Denmark

Megan Sheree Parker is a second-grader at Olney Elementary School and this year's Junior Miss Denmark. Parker, 7, is involved in soccer, ballet and baseball. Her favorite school subject is reading, and she also enjoys camping, four-track riding and swimming.

Parker and her brother, Grady, are the children of Jim and Sheree Parker of Astoria.

2001 Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer Junior Festival Court



Junior Miss Finland

Maraija Megan Williamson, 9, is Junior Miss Finland 2001. She participates in basketball and school plays at Hilda Lahti Elementary School in Knappa and is active in church programs. Williamson loves to draw and go fishing and camping with her family, including her 10-year-old sister, Marika, and her 6-year-old brother, Mathew. She also enjoys riding her neighbor's horse. Williamson is the daughter of Bob and Heli Williamson of Svensen.

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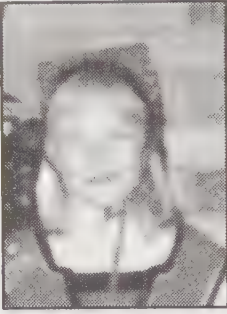
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2001 Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer Junior Festival Court



Junior Miss Norway

Brittany Ann Nyberg, Junior Miss Norway, is 8 years old and attends third grade at Warrenton Grade School. She is a junior member of the 4-H Livestock Club and is active in softball and the Scandinavian Dancers. Nyberg enjoys tap classes at Maddox Dance Studio, swimming, camping, boating and being with her friends. She also loves animals. Nyberg and her sister, Kaylee, are the children of Willie and Lisa Nyberg of Warrenton.

2001 Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer Junior Festival Court



Junior Miss Sweden

Courtney Ruth Carlson, 8, of Astoria is Junior Miss Sweden 2001. She attends third grade at Olney Elementary School and is active in baseball, choir, bowling and her church group. She enjoys reading, outdoor sports and playing on the computer.

Carlson, her sister, Danielle, and her brother, Darren Jr., are the children of Darren Carlson Sr. and the grandchildren of Dick and Laurel Bjork Carlson, all of Astoria.

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2001 Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer Festival Court



Chaperone

Becky Nelson

The senior chaperone for the 2001 Scandinavian Midsummer Festival is Becky Nelson of Astoria. Nelson lists her national heritage as Norwegian, but counts herself Danish by marriage. She is a council member of the First Lutheran Church and serves on the Lutheran Family Services Advisory Committee and board of trustees, as well as on the Scandinavian Festival Association Committee. She is also active in the Lower Columbia Danish Society.

2001 Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer Junior Festival Court



Chaperone

Donna Holmstedt

Donna Holmstedt of Astoria is this year's junior chaperone. A Norwegian by descent, Holmstedt is active in the First Lutheran Church, the Community Christmas Basket project, Victory over Child Abuse camp and the Clatsop County Food Bank.

She and her husband, John, have three children, Mike, Becky and Scott, and 10 grandchildren. Her favorite hobby is being a grandma.



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2001 Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer Junior Festival Court



Crown Bearer

The crown bearer for the 2001 Scandinavian Midsummer Festival Court is 7-year-old Nathan Michael Ladd, a second-grader at Warrenton Grade School. Ladd is involved in Scandinavian dancing, hunting and fishing, and enjoys science, especially bugs, bones and the solar system. He also enjoys going to the beach with his father. Ladd and his younger sister Amanda are the children of Corey and Roberta Ladd of Hammond.

Festival Quotes

What is your favorite part of the Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer Festival?

"I'm one of the old-timers. I love to come and dance. Today, I made open-face skipper sturgeon sandwiches in a booth."

Lenore Hauke
Astoria

"This is a continuation of my life. I'm a Swede. I like the people."

Pjeieter "Peter" Strandberg
Olney

"Friday night and the Miss Scandinavia ... and the food, I like it all."

Raimo Tila (Grandfather of Niina Tila, 2000 Junior Miss Finland)
Astoria

"Mostly the Scandinavian dancing. I don't dance, but my grandparents do." (Dale and Margaret Perkins of Astoria)

Somer Perkins
Price, Utah

"The Finnish Brotherhood's rice pudding, it's great! The festival is a lot of work, but a lot of fun. It's part of my life."

Katrina Ivanoff



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while you are in town, stop by Astoria's own Antique Mall**

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For information about emigration from the Swedish-speaking parts of Finland:
e-mail: sfhs@gte.net FAX: 206-782-5813 Web page: <http://home1.gte.net/SFHS/index.htm>

2001 Scandinavian Festival Meals

SATURDAY BREAKFAST

Served in the Cafeteria and sponsored by
the Clatsop Association of Realtors
Scholarship Fund.

Hours served:
7:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

MENU:

Ham, Scrambled Eggs and All-You-
Can-Eat Pancakes, Coffee, Tea & Milk.

COST:

\$4.00 for Adults; \$2.00 for Children
6-12; and 5 and under eat Free!

SATURDAY LUNCH

Served in the Cafeteria and sponsored by
the Swedish Order of VASA.

Hours served:
11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

MENU:

Swedish Pea Soup & Rye Bread.
Coffee or Pop.

COST:

\$4

SATURDAY SCANDINAVIAN DINNER

Served in the Cafeteria and sponsored by
the Swedish Order of Vasa

Hours served:

4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.

MENU:

Swedish meatballs, Mashed Potatoes &
Gravy, Red Cabbage, Green Beans, Rye
Bread, Dessert and a Beverage.

COST:

\$8 for Adults; \$4 for Children 6-12; and
Free! for children age 5 and under.

SUNDAY BRUNCH

Served in the cafeteria and sponsored by
the Astoria Rotary Club.

Hours served:

8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

MENU:

Pannukakku (Finnish Pancake), Danish
Ham, Fresh Fruit, Coffee, Tea & Milk

COST:

\$5 for Adults; \$3 for Children
6-12; and Free! for children age
5 and under.

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Strike up a conversation with others in a Scandinavian language. We may sing a few simple songs too!

This event, introduced at the festival in 1999, carries great interest. The event happens again this year – with improvements. We invite you to join us.

This is not a language lesson, just an opportunity for anyone, Scandinavian or not, to get together with others and converse in Danish, Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish. There will be a person from the "old country" (each one) to keep the conversation rolling.

Join us in a Scandinavian singalong! For a fun time, drop by for just a few minutes or stay the entire hour.

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(WELCOME!)**

LET'S TALK SCANDINAVIAN SCHEDULE:

2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. SWEDISH Cafeteria Hallway

2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. FINNISH Room 006, Booth Hallway

3:45 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. DANISH Cafeteria Hallway

3:45 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. NORWEGIAN Room 006, Booth Hallway

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Scandinavian Midsummer Festival History

Editor's note: The following is an excerpt of an article written by Astorian Bruce Berney, and originally read to the coronation assembly at the Scandinavian Midsummer Festival on June 21, 1969. Berney, who directed the Astoria Public Library for 30 years before retiring, researched library material to prepare the article.

A study of the origins of midsummer festivals reveals that all European peoples share in this folklore. The celebrations of Whitsunday, May Day, Midsummer's Eve and St. John's Eve originated 2000 or 3000 years ago with the worship of trees and fire.

It is easy to imagine that the ancients noticed that although humans succumb to the withering of old age, a tree withers in the fall but is reborn in the spring. Therefore, it possesses a kind of immortality.

Dancing around the Maypole became the

favorite spring activity for the happy English during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. But during Puritan times it was discouraged. In 1583, it was described as a pastime of Satan, the prince of Hell. Maypoles were destroyed and the custom did not continue to develop there as it did in Scandinavia.

Crowning the Midsummer's Day queen as we do in Astoria is no new thing. In a parish of Denmark, it used to be the custom at Whitsuntide to select a little girl to be the Whitsun Bride. She was dressed up in her mother's wedding gown and a crown of spring flowers. A little boy, chosen for her groom, was bedecked with ribbons.

With other children, baskets in hands, they would form a procession and march from farm to farm begging for contributions of eggs, butter, loaves, cream, coffee, sugar and tallow candles. When they had made the round, some of the farmer's wives would help them prepare a wedding feast, after which they would dance until the birds began to sing.

In parts of Norway and Sweden, a young woman chosen to be the Midsummer's bride selects her own groom, and for the season, they are regarded by the community as man and wife.

Although somehow the Swedish customs associated with Midsummer festivals have become the most famous, we must give credit for the origin of the midsummer fires to Norway. The most beloved and beautiful of the old Norse gods was the tree-spirit Balder, son of the great god Odin. His death was foretold, so the council of gods took an oath to ensure his safety from the elements of fire and water,

Continued on page 22

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Scandinavian Midsummer Festival History

Continued from page 20

from all metals, trees, sicknesses, poisons and beasts that they would not hurt him.

The gods rejoiced that Balder was now safe. But Loki, the mischief maker, found that the young plant mistletoe had not taken the oath. Throwing it at Balder caused him to die instantly. The gods then cremated his body, along with that of his wife who had died of grief.

Midsummer fires are considered to be the ritual reenactment of the cremation of Balder. In ancient times, lots were drawn to choose which man of the community would represent the god and be burned on the fire. In later times, However, the representative would merely lie down near the fire and pretend to be sacrificed, or used a dummy for a proxy. Now it is common for brave souls to jump over the fire, believing it will bring good luck.

There are two theories on the benefits of the ritual fire. One is that it is a suncharm which prolongs the season of light and growth. The other is that fire purifies and disinfects, thus producing a good climate for growing crops.

The Swedes believe that dancing around the fires is protection from the trolls.

The Norwegians light their bonfires and stay up until the early sun rises. The Finns arrange their annual vacations to fall at this time and make pilgrimages to their family homes for reunion. It is a popular time for weddings, and the views of fields of lily-of-the-valley and mountain ash trees inspire a profound love of country.

Perhaps we think of Astoria's annual festival as merely a recollection of old country traditions. Instead, we should regard it as a significant part of our enjoyment of life in this century. It is important that we come together for good food and fun.

More Festival Quotes

What is your favorite part of the Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer Festival?

"I married a Norwegian girl. I come down for the queen's coronation. I like that, to hear the girls tell about their heritage. I was rooting for Miss Norway."

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2001 Honored Scandinavian Immigrants



Norwegian Immigrant Dagfinn Sigvald Meyer

Dagfinn Meyer was born in Rissa (Trondelag) Norway on Aug. 9, 1927, where his father and mother lived most of their lives. His father was a purser in the Norwegian Merchant Marines until the

Germans confiscated the ship – he then stayed home the duration of World War II. The family bought a little farm in Rissa, where Dagfinn lived during his youth.

After the war, he went into the Norwegian Navy's submarine division for two years and from there the Norwegian Merchant Marines.

He worked as chief electrician for various shipping companies for about 20 years before landing in Astoria. Dagfinn came from Canada on July 10, 1971. His ship lay in the Columbia River for more than two months during a longshore strike. It was then that Dagfinn desired to move here, because it was always a wish to come to the West Coast when he was a young boy. The plan was for him to live with an uncle in Canada, but that never materialized.

Dagfinn Meyer has children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren in Norway. A son and daughter-in-law and three grandchildren live in Astoria. One of his sons served in the U.S. Air Force for four years.

Dagfinn has visited Norway many times and several of his family members have visited Astoria.



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2001 Honored Scandinavian Immigrants



Finnish Immigrants Vaino and Lempi Koskela

Vaino was born in Kurikka, Finland, on Feb. 17, 1924, and Lempi in Uukuniemi, Finland, on Nov. 24, 1924. They will celebrate 52 years of marriage Aug. 21.

Both Vaino and Lempi served Finland

during its war with Russia. Vaino served at the front and was wounded. Lempi worked in a factory sewing clothes for the soldiers.

After the war, Vaino went to work for his brother's tailoring business. After many years of working in his brother's shop, he opened his own and Lempi took his place at his brother's shop. This is where Vaino and Lempi met. They married in 1949.

Their son, George, was born in Finland in 1951. Vaino immigrated to the United States by New York City on March 11, 1955, with a job waiting for him in Duluth, Minn. A Norwegian immigrant named Peter Knutsen had a men's clothing and tailoring business. At that time, in order to come over to the United States, one had to have a job waiting. Mr. Knutsen was a very nice man, but was ill and died shortly after Vaino began working for him.

Lempi and George came to the United States on May 7, 1956. Lempi went to work in a sewing factory that made men and women's outerwear. Later, she worked at another similar factory and Vaino went to work at another men's store as an alteration

Continued on page 30

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2001 Honored Scandinavian Immigrants



Swedish Immigrant Stan Swanson

Stan was born in Töre, Sweden, on Jan. 10, 1942. Töre was also the birthplace of his parents, Arthur and Sigrid Svanljung and his

brother, Sten.

The family came to Washington state in 1947, where Artur's brothers already lived. They returned to Sweden in 1950, but then, finally, settled in Longview, Wash., in 1951. The lure of Astoria's plywood mill brought them to the North Coast in 1954. After their sister Arleen was born, the boys Americanized their name and the parents came to be known as Swanson.

Stan attended Astoria schools and eventually owned a share in the mill. He then worked for Coca-Cola for more than 20 years, retiring in 1994.

Because his parents returned to Sweden in 1975, Stan made several trips back to his birthplace until their deaths.

He and his wife, Faith, enjoy boating and fishing on the Columbia River. Their daughter, Brenda, and her husband and three children live nearby in Castle Rock, Wash., and visit often.

Stan is a member of the VASA Lodge and thanks them for this opportunity to represent his homeland.

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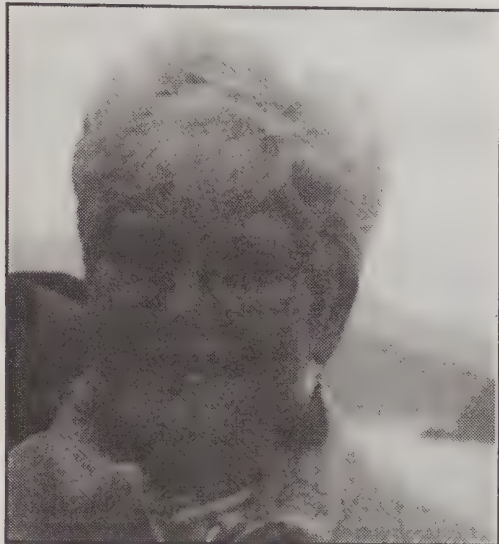
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2001 Honored Scandinavian Immigrants



**Danish Immigrant
Tonny Blair**

Tonny Blair was born in Copenhagen, Denmark, on Feb. 14, 1941, the daughter of Henry Schnell and Sonja Harvad Schnell. She spent her childhood in Copenhagen proper, but has many fond memories of visit-

ing her relatives in the north of Sjaelland in Graested and Gilleleje. Tonny went to school in Copenhagen, graduating in 1958.

She left Denmark in 1959 and immigrated to the United States to join her father in San Diego. He had moved to the U.S. earlier. She traveled from Copenhagen to Los Angeles on an 18-hour flight via Sondrestromfjord, Greenland, and Winnipeg, Canada. She lived in San Diego for five years before moving north to Portland and Anchorage, Alaska.

She met her husband, Roger, in Anchorage. They married in 1974 and lived in Alaska for seven years before moving to Portland for a number of years. Tonny became a U.S. citizen in 1998. She and her husband moved to Astoria in the summer of 2000.

The couple have four children, Debbie, 38; Brian, 36; and Deanna, 35, all by Tonny's previous marriage, and Cory, 23. They have eight grandchildren, seven girls and one boy. Tonny and Roger have traveled to Denmark several times to visit family, most recently three years ago.

Tonny is an accomplished seamstress who knits and does cross stitch. Her interest now

Continued on page 30

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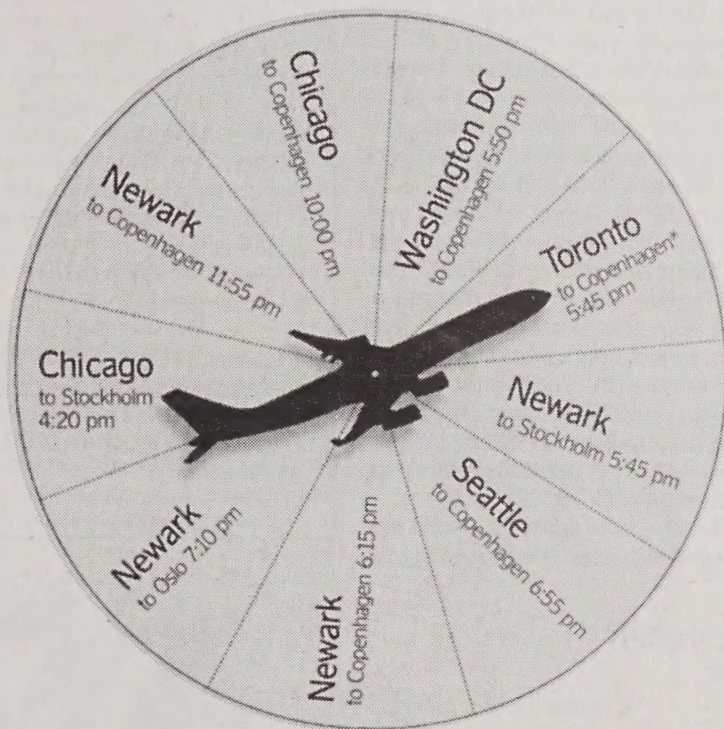
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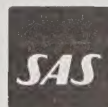


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Finnish Immigrants Vaino and Lempi Koskela

Continued from page 25

tailor. Their daughter, Leila, was born in Duluth in 1962.

After 11 years in Duluth, Vaino was offered a similar job in Hibbing, Minn., which he accepted. The family moved there in 1963. After several years, he opened his own tailoring business: Koskela's Tailoring. Lempi assisted with the alterations and sewed at home. They closed their tailoring business after many years and moved back to Duluth.

Their son, George, had joined the U.S. Navy in the early 1970s and by 1976 was stationed in Coos Bay. The family visited him for Easter 1977. They decided to drive up the coast and visit friends who lived in Astoria. It was through the help of a friend in Astoria that Vaino was able to purchase a working share at the Astoria Plywood Mill. The family moved to Astoria on Oct. 19, 1977. Vaino retired from the Plywood Mill on Aug. 1, 1985. Lempi worked in several fish processing plants in Astoria and retired on May 30, 1986.

Vaino and Lempi would like to thank the Finnish Brotherhood Lodge for this recognition.

Danish Immigrant Tonny Blair

Continued from page 25

is crafting porcelain dolls. She has studied under three instructors and won numerous awards for excellence in doll making. She particularly enjoys hand-crafting antique reproduction dolls. To see some of her handmade porcelain dolls and her renditions of Old World Victorian Santas and Julenisser (Danish Christmas elves), stop by Tonny's booth at the Festival.

Local Scandinavian Lodges

DENMARK

Lower Columbia Danish Society

FINLAND

Astoria Lodge of the United Finnish

Kaleva Brothers and Sisters

ICELAND

Icelandic Lodge

NORWAY

The Sons of Norway Lodge, The

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SWEDEN

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Ethnic melting pot shaped today's North Coast

The first Scandinavians arrived in Clatsop County in the 1860s.

An 1890 Census showed Scandinavians, including Swedes, Finns, Norwegians, were the bulk of the population, as well as Canadians, according to George Hough Jr, coordinator of state data at Portland State University's Population Research Center.

Many groups fell under the category of Scandinavian, said Hough.

Famine and political strife in their homeland fueled Finnish immigration. The county population rose sharply to almost 23,000 in the 1920's, marking a sharp rise in the Finnish population. Their numbers reached nearly 3,000.

— Darren L. Dunlap, The Daily Astorian



**TERVETULOA!
VELKOMMEN!
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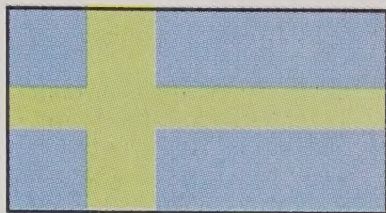
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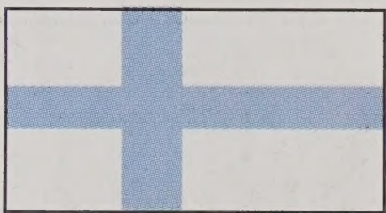
DENMARK

Denmark is not only the oldest kingdom in the world today, it also has the world's oldest flag, the Dannebrog, red with a white cross. As the oldest flag in Scandinavia, the Dannebrog provided the pattern for the other Scandinavian flags. According to legend, it descended "as a sign from heaven" in 1219, turning defeat into victory for the Danish crusaders. The Dannebrog celebrated its 750th anniversary in 1969. The Danes use every festive opportunity to fly their flags and this year's Midsummer Festival will be no exception.



SWEDEN

The Swedish flag is a yellow cross on a light blue field. There are many reasons for the Swedish flag being blue and yellow. They are the outstanding colors in the northern land. The flowers, the lakes, yellow corn-fields against the blue of a summer's sky and the blue eyes and blonde hair of the girls. There are the same today as when the flag was first raised above Swedish soil.



FINLAND

Finnish heraldry dates to the 16th century. Battle flags were displayed on equal basis with the Swedish armed forces during this period. When Finland became a grand duchy under Russia, it was allowed the privilege of flying its own flag, similar to the present day flag of a blue cross on a white background. The present standard was adopted in 1918 after Finland's independence from Russia. The blue signifies the sky and lakes of Finland and the white, a blanket of snow.



NORWAY

The Norwegian flag, first approved for use by merchant ships in 1821, became the national flag in 1898. The red field bears a blue cross superimposed on a broader white cross. The cross reflects Christian tradition, which began in Norway about the time the Viking period ended.

Norway was united with Denmark for more than 400 years under the Danish flag, then transferred to Sweden at the end of the Napoleonic wars. Norwegians had several grievances, one of which was that they had no flag. In 1821, they decided to have their own flag.



ICELAND

The modern Icelandic flag came into existence in 1915. For Icelanders it is like a vision of their country's landscape. Of the three colors of the flag, the deep blue signifies the ocean, the red the fire and the white the ice. The cross symbolizes the Christian faith, which the Nordic people have shared over a millennium. In the sign of the cross, the colors of the Icelandic flag united in a harmonious triad.

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